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COUNTRY Bulgaria

DATE DISTR. 11 Dec. 1951

The Marno Pole Airfield SUBJECT

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- The Marno Pole Airfield is situated between Karlovo (RA-5646) and Kalofer (RA-6952), 6 kilometers from Karlovo and Gara Banya and 500 meters from Gara Botev. The airfield occupies an area 10 x 5 kilometers in which there is a school and workshops for heavy repairs, installations, etc. The airfield was heavily bombed during the war and was subsequently reconstructed. The school is for the trainees of the air forces school at Plovdiv and is one of 40 buildings, the others being workshops, living quarters, barracks, a hospital, staff offices, etc. In the other part of the airfield there are 10 iron and concrete hangars, 200 x 50 meters, covered with tin sheets, two crosswise cement runways, 1200 x 30 meters each, underground gas dumps, and, above ground, 10 gas cisterns mounted vertically on concrete foundations.
- The airfield has Zenith antiaircraft artillery, a radio station, fire control, electric power, and is surrounded on all sides by barbed wire. About 40 trucks and prime movers are used for transportation purposes.
- 3. Three private railroad branches connect the airfield with Gara Botev and the highways leading to Kalofer, Karlovo, Sopot (Vazovgrad), Plovdiv, and Banya. There are three trains running regularly during the day: in the morning, at noon, and in the evening, carrying the workers to Karlovo, Sopot, Debene, and Banya, where they and their families live. At noon the workers eat at the mess where for 70 leva they receive improved rations not including bread. The wages vary from 380, 420, and 480 leva, to 520 leva a day for the specialists. Workers transportation expenses to and from their residence is paid by the airfield administration.
- The total personnel amounts to 3,500, including staff, troops, specialists (installation, lathe, cutting projects, electro-mechanics), general workers, chauffeurs, clerks, etc. Only 600 of these are civilians; all the rest, including the administrative personnel, are in uniform. Informant heard that Sussian specialists were stationed at the airfield but did not see any personally.
- 5. There are approximately 250 airplanes at Marno Pole, most of which are Soviet craft that arrived in May-June 1951. There are also munitions dumps at the airfield but informant was unable to indicate their precise location.

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- Informant knows personally the following men serving at Marno Pole:

 - a. Georgi Piskov, Chief Technician, from Karlovo;
 b. Alexander Radoev, chief of the Lathe Department, from Karlovo;
 c. Georgi Boshev Rakitin, chief of the Installation Department, from
 - Sopot; and
 - d. Dr. Vasil Purvenov, Chief Physician, from Sofia.

None of the above are Communists; the first three men are former officers of the air force.

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Comment: Grid locations are given on the AMS M506, 1:250,000 Map Series.

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